

**NOAA ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR COMMERCIAL REMOTE SENSING
(ACCRES)
MEETING SUMMARY**

CLOSED SESSION

The NOAA Advisory Committee for Commercial Remote Sensing (ACCRES) convened its third meeting in a closed session at 8:30 a.m. on May 16, 2003, at NOAA, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland. The session was closed to the public pursuant to Section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. 2, as amended by Section 5(c) of the Government in Sunshine Act, P.L. 94-409 and in accordance with Section 552b(c)(1) of Title 5, United States Code. The closed session addressed classified issues and related national and foreign policy considerations for NOAA's licensing program.

Committee members present:

Dr. Wanda Austin, The Aerospace Corporation
Mr. Richard Cooke, Research Systems, Incorporated
Mr. Robert Dalal, Space Imaging, Incorporated
Mr. Martin Faga, MITRE
Ms. Roberta Lenczowski, on Behalf of Lt. General James Clapper, National Imagery and Mapping Agency
Dr. Joanne Gabrynowicz, National Remote Sensing and Space Law Center, University of Mississippi
Mr. Frank Williams, on Behalf of Michael Hewins, AstroVision International, Inc.
Dr. Donald Lauer, American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing
Mr. Victor Leonard, Resource21, LLC
Mr. Robert Winokur, Earth Satellite Corporation
Dr. Charles Groat, US Geological Survey

Presiding Staff of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA):

Mr. Timothy Stryker, Chief, Satellite Activities Branch and ACCRES Designated Federal Officer
Mr. Gregory Withee, Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services
Mr. Glenn Tallia, Senior Counselor, NOAA General Counsel

OPEN SESSION

The NOAA Advisory Committee for Commercial Remote Sensing (ACCRES) was convened at 10:40 a.m. at NOAA, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland. In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the meeting was open to the public.

The Chairman, Robert Winokur, thanked Committee members and members of the public for attending the third meeting of ACCRES. He stated that the current focus of the Committee is the new U.S. Commercial Remote Sensing Policy released to the public May 13.

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Presiding Staff of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA):

Mr. Timothy Stryker, Remote Sensing Licensing Coordinator and ACCRES Designated Federal Officer
Mr. Gregory Withee, Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services
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Summary of Commercial Remote Sensing Satellite Symposium Results

Mr. Stryker provided an overview of the Commercial Remote Sensing Satellite Symposium held in Washington, DC, May 13-15. The symposium was sponsored by NOAA and supported by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Mr. Stryker thanked NASA and USGS for their support in coordinating this very successful symposium.

Coinciding with release of the new U.S. Commercial Remote Sensing Policy, the symposium provided a timely opportunity for discussion of a range of commercial remote sensing issues. Many members of the Advisory Committee participated in the symposium. The meeting format included very few Powerpoint presentations and featured several panel discussions which promoted detailed, informative debate of current issues in the CRS market.

Participants were welcomed to the symposium by the NOAA Administrator, Vice Admiral U.S. Navy (Ret.) Conrad Lautenbacher, Jr. Donald Evans, Secretary of the Department of Commerce provided the keynote address. The Commercial Remote Sensing (CRS) industry role in Operation Iraqi Freedom was applauded and the importance of CRS products across a wide range of applications in the future was recognized. Gil Klinger, Director for Space Policy on the National Security Council provided a detailed briefing on the new CRS policy.

Panels included discussion of the current market, technological advances and second generation CRS systems, the nature of international competition and international markets, and the role of governments. Technologist Arpad Toth was the luncheon speaker on the first day of the symposium. ACCRES member Dr. Wanda Austin chaired a panel on solutions-based business. Environmental remediation services were discussed as well as pricing and licensing issues.

Mr. Withee moderated a panel on future systems and products which included discussion of advanced sensors and public private partnerships. This panel noted that government users drive CRS market development to a great extent; a position that would be repeated frequently during the symposium. During a panel discussing U.S. policy, participants recognized the significant challenges facing government agencies as they work to implement the new CRS policy.

Gerard Brachet, former Director General of the French Space Agency (CNES) provided a perspective on the future of CRS in his luncheon speech on Day 2 of the symposium, anticipating many developments from the intersection of public and private interests in remote sensing. A panel on non-U.S. policies on the CRS industry provided many interesting perspectives. A financial panel considered a variety of business models for the industry.

Committee member Roberta Lenczowski, Executive Director of the National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA), provided the keynote speech on the final morning of the symposium. In her talk on "The Information-Sensitive Environment" she related NIMA's approach to the use of CRS data and the systems in place to maximize benefit from data from the commercial industry. Dr. Groat observed that the Advisory Committee could learn a great deal from NIMA's commercial imagery procurement process. The Committee also noted that the successful use of CRS by the media in covering Operation Iraqi Freedom had raised public expectations for ready access to timely, relevant images and CRS' derived visual information.

The final session of the meeting revealed a range of views on prospects for the industry. There were doses of short-term pessimism. Dan Dubno from CBS provided insights into the use of CRS for news visuals and fly-through graphics during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Herb Satterlee, President and CEO of DigitalGlobe concluded the symposium with an upbeat message on current and future market growth.

From the NOAA perspective, the symposium appeared to be very well received by the CRS community and the panels provided many participants with a much better understanding of the industry. This included new insights into the extent of international collaborations between corporations. Mr. Stryker suggested the Advisory Committee might delve into this issue more deeply at a later date.

Dr. Gabrynowicz congratulated the organizing committee for putting together a very good meeting that provided an opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues. Applauding the symposium format, Mr. Faga commented that participation by a significant number of key players in the CRS industry, which was central to the success of the symposium, was largely due to the “inviting power” of the government agencies involved.

The Committee debated the merits of organizing another symposium at a future date. The Chairman noted that implementation of the new policy could take two years. At the same time, the commercial remote sensing industry is still growing and new problems will emerge. It will undoubtedly take a while to measure the impact of changes resulting from both of the above factors. Mr. Winokur suggested that NOAA consider hosting a second symposium in about two years.

Review of Committee Action Plan

The Chairman reviewed a number of issues that may arise as a result of the new Commercial Remote Sensing Policy. Various government agencies have specific implementation actions to execute within 120 days of April 25, the issue date for the policy. The policy supports the CRS industry by directing government agencies to purchase commercial data, and to use government satellite data to meet only those requirements that cannot be serviced by the commercial sector. At the same time, the policy encourages the CRS industry to deliver the best possible technology. Additionally, the policy directs NOAA to work with National Security partner agencies to determine what can be done to improve and streamline the licensing process.

The Chairman suggested that the Committee may wish to undertake a longer- term technology requirements review. Furthermore, since government agencies are empowered to purchase data from overseas providers and U.S. CRS companies are expanding partnerships with foreign providers, compilation of information on foreign capabilities as well as U.S. capabilities could be a useful tool. The Chairman also asked the Committee to consider how the Advisory Committee might assist the coordination of civil agency activities since the new policy directs civil agencies to work together in coordinating requirements for commercial data.

In the immediate future, the Advisory Committee will focus on two issues:

- 1) The civil agency requirements for commercial remote sensing (both identification of these requirements and coordination across agencies), and
- 2) Possibilities for streamlining the and improving NOAA's licensing process

Mr. Withee welcomed input on all aspects of the new Commercial Remote Sensing policy from the Advisory Committee at the outset of the policy implementation process. The Chairman requested that all members of the Advisory Committee send recommendations and comments on these two issues to him within two weeks of this Advisory Committee meeting. He encouraged committee members to share their thoughts with the rest of the Committee. Upon receiving input, the Chairman will determine whether Working Groups of the Advisory Committee should study specific issues.

The Advisory Committee will meet to consider policy implementation strategies approximately 90 days after the issue date of the policy, in the late June timeframe.

Mr. Withee stated that NOAA will take all comments from the Advisory Committee on all aspects of the new policy to meetings with representatives of the civil agencies.

NOAA will gather available data on civil agency budgets, and specifically CRS purchase allocations as requested by Dr. Gabrynowicz. The Committee noted that budget allocations on the defense side are classified but are larger than in civil agencies.

The Chairman expressed the hope that the Advisory Committee could help to diffuse confusion that exists in civil agencies between purchase of satellite systems and data purchase. Ms. Lenczowski invited members of the Committee to contact her to discuss lessons learned from NIMA's CRS procurement process. She noted that NIMA's practices will not change much as a result of the new White House policy given they reflect the approach used for the ClearView contract. However, helping to expedite the licensing reviews will require NIMA's active participation in facilitating the process.

The Chairman hoped that efforts would be made to educate the media that commercial satellites deliver a wide range of information and are not simply commercial spy satellites, referencing the USA Today article describing the new policy release.

Committee Members' Discussion

Dr. Austin suggested the Advisory Committee address NOAA's Earth Observation architecture concern. She noted that the DoD is already working on commercial architectures for Earth Observation. Mr. Withee stated that Committee input on this particular civil government/commercial intersect would be of great help. Dr.

Gabrynowicz invited presentations. Input from NOAA on the civil agency longer-term view would be needed. Dr. Austin suggested contacting Admiral Fisher of DoD's National Security Space who is leading the DoD effort. Mr. Withee undertook to provide the Committee with a report on the upcoming Earth Observation Summit as background to Committee deliberations.

Dr. Groat asked the Committee to remember that ultimately the debate is about money. The civil agencies are likely to end up with a wish list for CRS products that goes beyond what can be funded. The Chairman stated that civil agency requirements for CRS that emerge from policy implementation planning must have fiscal credibility. The budget climate is likely to be tough over the next two years and the list must be something that Congress will view favorably. A phased approach to budget growth might be considered.

Mr. Withee would arrange for NASA and USGS to brief the Advisory Committee on the Landsat Data Continuity Mission at some future date.

Public Comments

The Chairman invited public comment.

Mr. Steve Harrison of Boeing noted that the Senate Armed Services Committee had requested a technology review that could cover some of the longer-term technology issues that the Advisory Committee wished to address. The Senate report is due in Spring 2004. NOAA agreed to investigate this further.

Using NIMA's ClearView contracts as a benchmark, Joseph Dodd suggested that the CRS industry would possibly discount prices significantly if the civil agencies could coordinate a multi-year civil agency agreement for data purchase.

The meeting adjourned at 11:47 a.m.